

Registry Department, £370; Poor Relief Department, £9,451; Aboriginal Department, £2,700; Government Store-keeper's Department, £954 16s.; Government Gardens Department, £505 18s.; Mining Department, £1,030.

These votes were agreed to, without discussion.

Special Coast Survey, £2,250 :

MR. SHENTON presumed the *Myrmidon*, the new steamer to be employed in this service, would shortly be on the station, and commence operations on the North-West coast?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. Sir M. Fraser) said he had a private communication from the Hydrographer to the Admiralty, who said that a new crew had been sent out to Sydney for the *Myrmidon*, and that she would leave Sydney for this colony early in April, proceeding direct to Cambridge Gulf, where she would first break ground, working between there and King Sound.

The vote was then passed.

Works and Buildings, £15,111 :

MR. SHENTON, referring to the item "Police Buildings: Repairs to various stations, £1,800," said that in view of the reduction recently made in the police force he presumed some of these stations had been broken up. Last year the House voted £1,800 for repairing police stations, and this year they were asked for £1,500. He thought they ought to have some specific details as to the expenditure of this vote.

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS (Hon. J. A. Wright) said this was the very lowest sum which it was estimated would suffice to provide for the most pressing requirements of the year. The Commissioner of Police had asked for £6,000, and he had divided it by 4. These police buildings were growing older every year, and necessary repairs were neglected simply because the vote was cut down.

MR. SHENTON and MR. VENN commented upon the ornate and costly description of the cottages provided for railway workmen at Beverley, which they submitted were of too expensive a type altogether.

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS (Hon. J. A. Wright) said these cottages were of an exceptional character, having been designed as a type for the

guidance of the Great Southern Railway syndicate.

MR. SHENTON moved that progress be reported, and leave given to sit again. Agreed to.

Progress reported.

The House adjourned at ten minutes past four o'clock.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL,

Friday, 23rd March, 1888.

List of Lessees of Crown Lands under new Land Regulations—Revenue and Expenditure Account for 1887—Message (No. 10): Expurgated passage in Secretary of State's Despatch to Responsible Government—Bunbury-Blackwood Railway: Opening of, for traffic—Railway from Bayswater to Vasse: Messrs. McNeil & Co's. proposals—Resolutions traversing Secretary of State's despatches on the subject of a change in the Constitution—Beverley-Albany Railway Contract Confirmation Bill: first reading—Estimates (Revised), 1888: further considered—Adjournment.

The Speaker took the Chair at seven o'clock, p.m.

PRAYERS.

LIST OF LESSEES UNDER NEW LAND REGULATIONS.

MR. MARMION, in accordance with notice, asked the Commissioner of Crown Lands to furnish a return showing the amount of land, and the names of lessees of Crown Lands in all districts other than the Central District, who have not availed themselves of the new Land Regulations. The reason he moved for this return was in order to ascertain whether Crown tenants had availed themselves or not of the chance which these regulations afforded them of obtaining long leases.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. J. Forrest) said he regretted he was unable at present to comply with the hon. member's request, as he had not yet received all the returns from the Northern District; but, he

promised the hon. member to supply the information he asked for next session. He might say that the majority of lessees had availed themselves of the new Land Regulations.

REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR 1887.

MR. SHOLL, in accordance with notice, asked the Colonial Secretary to lay on the table of the House the usual Annual Returns prepared by the Colonial Treasurer, including Comparative Statements of Revenue and Expenditure, with Auditor General's Report on the Accounts of the colony for 1887, as provided by the Audit Act (46th Vict. No. 1, clause 13).

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. Sir M. Fraser) said he had already informed the House that these returns were in the hands of the Government Printer, and would be laid on the table as soon as they were ready—probably to-morrow.

MESSAGE (No. 10): EXPURGATED PASSAGE FROM DESPATCH *re* RESPONSIBLE GOVERNMENT.

THE SPEAKER announced the receipt of the following Message from His Excellency the Governor:—

"In reply to Address of the Honorable 'the Legislative Council No. 10, dated 'the 21st instant, the Governor has the honor to state that the passage referred to of his Despatch No. 137, of the 12th of July last, was omitted from publication, in accordance with official usage, for a reason which renders its production inexpedient, at least for the present. Government House, 23rd March, 1888."

BUNBURY-BLACKWOOD RAILWAY: OPENING FOR TRAFFIC.

MR. VENN, in moving the resolution standing in his name—"That, in the opinion of this House, it is desirable that the Government should take the necessary steps forthwith to open for traffic the first section of the Blackwood Railway, and make provisions on the Estimates for the same"—said he had refrained from moving the resolution the other day in consequence of the paucity of members present, as he did

not wish it to be said that, if he carried his motion, he had snatched a victory in a thin House. When the inhabitants of the Wellington district first petitioned the Government for the construction of a railway to develop, among other things, the timber industry, there were two mills in working order in the district, one of them fitted up with the most modern machinery and capable of turning out a very large output of timber; the other had been at work for many years, and returned to the proprietor a fair return upon his investment. It was found, however, that to compete against the red gum of the other colonies it would be impossible for them to do so successfully, so long as they had to pay such heavy haulage charges from the timber ranges to Bunbury, the port of shipment. Consequently the timber industry languished. This it was which had first induced the people of the district to petition the House and the Government for a railway from Bunbury to the timber ranges. Personally he had never advocated a line to the timber ranges, for the purpose of benefiting or developing one particular industry; he had nothing in his mind to show him that it would be a fair thing for the Government to spend a large sum of money for the development of one industry alone, and it might be remembered that he took a strong view on that point at the time. He had always desired that this line should be the first section of a line to the Blackwood district. The House, however, in its wisdom, came to the conclusion, when the last loan was being apportioned, that a sum of £40,000 should be allotted to the Wellington district for a line from Bunbury to Boyanup. Of that amount £36,000 had been expended in the construction of this line, which was recently completed. It was well understood at the time that it was to be the first section of a line to be extended hereafter in the direction of the Blackwood, and not for the benefit of one particular industry. When the proposal for constructing this line was under discussion in the House, the leader of the Government side spoke highly of the capabilities of the district, and of the advantages which railway communication would confer in the development of its agricultural resources.

The Commissioner of Crown Lands also spoke—as the hon. gentleman always had spoken, as a true Southern man, with regard to the land of his birth—in high terms of the capabilities of the district; and that House, by a majority, passed the vote, and the line was commenced. It was completed a few months ago, and handed over by the contractor to the Government, and it was with great surprise that he found, on his recent return from the other colonies, that the Government did not contemplate opening the line. He should be sorry for it to go abroad that he should be a member of a House who could have been a party to the construction of a line of railway, costing £34,000 or £36,000, and then, immediately on the completion of the line, abandon it, and shut it up altogether. He thought it was a reflection upon the judgment of the House. He felt satisfied that, under any other form of Government, a Ministry who acted in that way would have to answer for it by the loss of their seats. He regretted in many ways that the circumstances which first induced the residents of the district to petition for a railway—he alluded to the condition of the timber trade—were not now so favorable, as to the amount of probable traffic, as it was at that time. The two extensive timber mills he had referred to had, at the present moment, stopped; one of them had been removed altogether, the other remained *in statu quo*, and, so far as he knew, there was no immediate prospect of its being reopened. But it was always on the cards that it might be reopened at any moment, and that it would give a very large amount of traffic indeed. At the time referred to, one of these mills alone was spending £12,000 a year for haulage. But, whether these mills were re-established or not, the fertility of the district had in no way altered, and the number of its inhabitants had certainly increased, so that this line would now serve a larger number of people than it would have done two or three years ago, when it was decided to build it. The other day he asked the Commissioner of Railways for a return showing the traffic on some other lines of railway now working in the colony; he did so with the view of showing that if the views of the Government with regard to this par-

ticular line were to obtain with regard to many other lines in the colony, we should at the present moment have three or four of these other lines closed—he was almost inclined to say five or six. He had purposely abstained (and he did so advisedly) from asking for the absolute cost of working these lines, because he felt the House would have taken a very strong view of it; therefore, he had been content to ask the Commissioner for the amount of traffic only, with the view of comparing it with the probable amount of traffic on this 15½ miles of railway from Bunbury to Boyanup. According to this return, the receipts on the Beverley branch of the Eastern Railway, between Beverley and Perth, were stated to be £278 per month. A very large passenger traffic appeared on this return, and he felt sure, from what he had himself observed in travelling on the line, that a large proportion of this passenger traffic must represent the navvies working for the contractors for the Albany railway, so that the ordinary receipts from passengers must be considerably reduced. On the Newcastle branch—a distance of 14 miles—the gross returns from goods and passenger traffic, during the two months the line had been opened, had been at the rate of £187 per month. On the Geraldton to Walkaway line the receipts had been £56 a month, and, on the Geraldton-Northampton line, £149 per month. The Cossack and Roebourne tramway had yielded, during the three months ended 1st March, at the rate of £196 per month. These were all gross receipts. In referring to these returns he wished to draw the attention of the House to this fact: that the population—and they must gauge the returns of traffic from the population—of the Blackwood district, including the Preston, Ferguson, and Dardanup, was something like 1,500 or 1,600, which very considerably exceeded the population of any of the districts he had referred to, who immediately surrounded the local lines. The logic of that was this: whatever the Government might say as to the probable amount of traffic on this Blackwood line, it was clear—the obvious deduction was—that it would be in excess of several of the returns he had referred to, very much in excess. Another thing he wished to draw the attention of the

House to was this: if the Government were to apply the same theory or principle that we must close every public work or department that did not show a profit, we should have to close most of our railway lines, and we should have to close most of our post offices and telegraph stations. As regards our railways, he should be sorry to see a single branch of them closed. These lines were built in anticipation of traffic and to encourage traffic, by stimulating production and developing the resources of the country. Unless we gave our settlers every facility for getting their produce to market, we could never hope to see the country largely settled, or populated in any way whatever. They were told every day that a large number of people were leaving the colony, and probably this was due in a great measure to the fact that they did not find the same facilities for settlement here as were to be found in the other colonies. Go where you liked in Victoria—and the same might be said with regard to large areas in South Australia—and you were sure to find a railway, running in some cases through almost uninhabited tracts of country, in the expectation of creating settlement and developing traffic. And, in almost every instance where they had been constructed, these railways had turned out well, and done a great deal of good to the country. The Commissioner of Railways estimated that the cost of working this Blackwood line (outside the contingency list) would be £3,595 a year. This estimate appeared to his (Mr. Venn's) mind—and he said it with all due deference to the Commissioner—a very large sum indeed. It meant the employment of a very large staff for working this short line, and it had struck him that it was a long way beyond what was required; it was a long way beyond what our timber companies required to work their lines. He felt sure that if these private companies were to work their lines on the same expensive system, the timber industry would very soon collapse altogether. However, he was bound to take the Commissioner's estimate as correct, and he did not ask the House to reduce it. He also thought the returns would be in excess of what the hon. gentleman anticipated. Having been a resident of the district for a

number of years, he knew what traffic passed along that road from Busselton into Bunbury, and he felt sure that the passenger traffic alone would be very considerable, as also would the goods traffic. It altogether passed his comprehension that we should expend £36,000 in the construction of a line of railway, and the moment it was completed shut it up, without testing the question of whether it was likely to pay or not. If the Government had run this line (say) for six months, or for twelve months, and found that it did no good in developing the district, he for one would have been disposed to have gone with them, and closed it. But he thought it was a reflection upon the judgment of the House that, at the risk of losing at the most £2,000 a year—and he did not think it would be more at the outside—probably nothing at all—they should agree to allow this line to remain unopened for an indefinite length of time, with the rolling stock on the spot, lying idle. He understood from the Commissioner that there was about £3,600 of the loan appropriated for the construction of the line still available, after all the compensation claims were paid. He thought he had now stated enough to show hon. members that the same principle had not been adopted with regard to this line as had been adopted with regard to other lines in the colony, and he thought it was very hard indeed that this "do nothing" policy, this cheese-paring policy, should have been reserved for the Southern districts alone. He hoped the House would support the motion which he had submitted for their affirmation.

CAPTAIN FAWCETT said he had very much pleasure in seconding the motion.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. Sir M. Fraser) said that on the Estimates as originally placed before the Council at the beginning of the session, in December last, provision was made for the working of this line, for the whole year, at an estimated cost of £4,100. But it pleased that honorable House to move the Government to withdraw those Estimates, and to request them to bring them in a revised form, in a reduced form, and so adjusting them that the expenditure should not exceed the amount at their disposal. The Estimates, as revised,

were now before the committee; and, after considering the railway vote, the committee had accepted it and passed it as it stood. Therefore it was only reasonable to conclude that the proposals of the Government, as embodied in these Estimates, had met with the approval of the committee. The vote for this Blackwood line had necessarily been expunged, and omitted from the revised Estimates, and the omission had apparently met with the full concurrence of the House, for not a word was said about it when the vote was under consideration. He could not see now any reason why the House should depart from the decision it arrived at, only a few days ago. We were still surrounded by the same difficulties as regards ways and means. The idea was certainly an original one, to propose as regards the unexpended balance of a loan borrowed for the construction of a railway that it should be devoted to cover the cost of working it.

MR. VENN: I did not suggest anything of the sort.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. Sir M. Fraser): Then I must have misunderstood the hon. member.

MR. CONGDON said his sympathies were certainly with the hon. member for Wellington in this matter. He could not conceive for a moment that the members of that House would ever have consented to the construction of a line of railway, at a cost to the colony of £36,000, if, in their opinion, it would not, when opened, pay a fair amount towards its working expenses. Even if such were the case, and that this line would probably not pay, he thought it was only fair, considering the working of other lines in the colony, that this Blackwood line should be placed in the same category, taking the fact into consideration that these railways were not built so much in the expectation that the colony would derive a direct profit from them as that they would indirectly contribute to the development of its resources. Regarded from that point of view he thought it was only fair and just to the district concerned that this Southern line should be opened for traffic, when they had everything ready for working it. Under the circumstances, he felt very much inclined to give his support to the motion.

MR. A. FORREST said he would go

a little further than the last hon. member who had spoken, and say that he would support it. He did so for many reasons. That House, some years ago, had to distribute a loan of half a million of money between the various districts of the colony, and, very justly, they gave the Southern districts a small slice of the cake. This was to construct a railway, starting from Bunbury in the direction of the Blackwood. That railway was now completed, and the necessary rolling stock on the spot. But the Government now said they wouldn't work it, but let the whole thing go to wreck and ruin. All he could say was: it would be a lasting shame to those who had the destinies of the colony in their hands, if this line, which cost the country nearly £40,000, was going to be kept shut up in this way. It was an unheard-of proceeding. Was it intended to remove the rails to some other part of the colony? People might say what they liked; the Southern districts were the finest portion of this colony—bar the North. It was the finest district we had, both for pastoral and agricultural pursuits, and also for the growth of the olive and the vine, and fruit generally. When the first section of this line was agreed upon it was never intended that it should stop where it is, at a red-gum tree in the forest; it was intended to be carried on. But now the Government meant to shut it up altogether. They wouldn't even open it, and give it a trial. He felt sorry for the hon. member for Wellington, whose whole heart was in this Blackwood railway, and, after all his struggles to get it and to benefit his district, the Government refused to work it. The traffic might perhaps be small at first; but it would increase, as the railway became more popular and better appreciated. He was sure it would pay quite as much as the line from Northam or Newcastle, or the line from York to Beverley.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS (Hon. J. A. Wright) said the Government had been blamed and held up to ridicule for building and not working this line. In the first place he might say that the Government had had nothing to do with proposing, or supporting the proposal, for the construction of this railway; in fact, as would be seen on

reference to *Hansard*, he had strongly opposed it, for several reasons. In the first place it could not be compared with any other line in the colony, in the way in which the hon. member had sought to institute a comparison. As the hon. member for Kimberley had just said: it commenced at Bunbury and finished at a red-gum tree. The Clackline branch commenced at its junction with the main trunk line and finished at the town of Newcastle. The same with the Northam line, the same with the Beverley line, the same with the Northampton line. All these lines commenced and terminated at some centre of population, and most of them were connected with a trunk line already in existence, and to which they acted as feeders. The only other line that would bear any comparison with this Bunbury line was the line from Geraldton to Walkaway. But the latter was built under totally different circumstances from the Bunbury line, for this reason: we already had an engine dépôt at Geraldton, we also had our plant and our staff there, for working the line from Geraldton to Northampton, which only ran three times a week; and it only entailed very little extra expenditure to utilise this staff and these conveniences in connection with the Walkaway line. If we had to import a new plant, erect new workshops, appoint an additional staff, and adopt an entirely new system at Champion Bay, most certainly this Walkaway line must have proved a very great failure, financially—as great a failure or possibly more than the line in which the hon. member for Wellington was interested. The hon. member said that the Government did not appear to anticipate a good return from this Bunbury line. They certainly did not. He would go further than that,—they anticipated a very bad return. He anticipated there would be no return. Even by the hon. member's own showing there would be a dead loss of £2,000 a year, at all events for the first year. It was no use blaming the Government in this matter. When the Estimates for the year were first brought in, full provision was made for the working of this line. But the House would not have it. They requested the Government to take back their Estimates and cut them down on a level with the anticipated revenue.

The Government did so. Unfortunately, his own department was that which suffered most from this pruning operation. They were obliged to cut off all avoidable or unnecessary expenditure, and, as far as they could, expenditure that was not likely to prove reproductive; and, necessarily, this railway, which, as it was really filling no great want, was among the items that had to be sacrificed. It was, therefore, unfair to blame the Government in the matter. It was also absurd to hold up the Government to ridicule, as having “abandoned” the line. The Government had not abandoned it; but, having no funds at the present moment to work it, had simply postponed the opening until next year, or until they could afford it. As he had already said, the Government had never advocated the line, from the very first; they had simply built it in deference to a resolution of that House. He had foreseen from the first that it would not be a paying line, and he told the House so; but the House would have it, and there it was,—likely, so far as he could see, to be another “white elephant.” If it had gone some farther distance there would have been some chance for it; but not to leave it where it now was, miles away from any settlement, yet only a comparatively short distance from Bunbury. People with their teams were not likely to unload in the bush, or to have their goods left in the bush; they would prefer coming right on to Bunbury.

Mr. LAYMAN, who was almost inaudible, was understood to say that he was one of those who had opposed the construction of this line, as he did not consider it was a work which the colony should have undertaken. At the same time, as the line had been made, and it was ready for traffic, he should like to see it opened. If the Government could not afford a sufficient sum for the year, they might try it for three months. They would then see what it was likely to do.

The motion upon being put was negatived, and, a division being called for, the numbers were—

Ayes ...	...	...	7
Noes ...	...	...	12

Majority against ... 5

AYES.
Mr. E. R. Brockman
Sir T. C. Campbell, Bart.
Mr. Congdon
Captain Fawcett
Mr. A. Forrest
Mr. Layman
Mr. Venn (Teller.)

NOES.
Mr. H. Brockman
Hon. J. Forrest
Mr. Harper
Mr. Hensman
Mr. Marmion
Mr. Morrison
Mr. Parker
Mr. Pearse
Mr. Randell
Hon. C. N. Warton
Hon. J. A. Wright
Hon. Sir M. Fraser
(Teller.)

RAILWAY FROM BAYSWATER TO VASSE: MESSRS. NEIL McNEIL & Co's. PROPOSAL.

Mr. PARKER, with leave, without notice, asked the Colonial Secretary whether the Government intended to take any action with reference to the proposal made by Messrs. Neil McNeil & Co., to construct a railway, on the guarantee principle, between Bayswater and the Vasse, a copy of which proposal had been presented to the House by the Government on the previous day.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. Sir M. Fraser) said he had followed his instructions by merely tendering the proposal; he was not aware that the Government intended to proceed any further in the matter, during this session.

RESPONSIBLE GOVERNMENT: Mr. PARKER'S RESOLUTIONS.

ADJOURNED DEBATE.

[*Vide p. 220 ante.*]

BEVERLEY-ALBANY RAILWAY CONTRACT CONFIRMATION BILL.

Read a first time.

ESTIMATES (REVISED), 1888.

These Estimates were further considered in committee.

Works and Buildings, £15,111 (adjourned debate):

Mr. SHENTON asked for some information with reference to the items "Rottneest, materials for additions to Lightkeeper's quarters, Coxswain's quarters, and Prison Building, £350," and "Repairs to Pilot's quarters, Rottneest, £60."

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS (Hon. J. A. Wright) explained the nature and the necessity of the proposed repairs and additions, the accommodation at the quarters being very restricted. The addition to the prison

building consisted of additional accommodation for the gaoler.

Mr. SHENTON said he found from the Suspense Account that a sum of £800 was available for warders' quarters at the end of last year, which ought to be quite enough. He thought it was time all this expenditure at Rottneest was stopped. He would move that the sum of £350 (as above) be reduced by £300.

The committee divided, with the following result—

Ayes ...	...	...	19
Noes ...	...	...	1
Majority for			18

AYES.
Mr. H. Brockman
Mr. E. R. Brockman
Sir T. C. Campbell, Bart.
Mr. Congdon
Captain Fawcett
Hon. J. Forrest
Mr. A. Forrest
Hon. Sir M. Fraser
Mr. Harper
Mr. Hensman
Mr. Layman
Mr. Marmion
Mr. Morrison
Mr. Pearse
Mr. Randell
Mr. Richardson
Mr. Scott
Mr. Venn
Hon. C. N. Warton
Hon. J. A. Wright
Mr. Shenton (teller.)

NOES.
Mr. Sholl (teller.)

Mr. SHOLL said that £200 appeared a very large sum to vote for furniture for Government House, seeing that they voted the same sum last year, and were always voting something.

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS (Hon. J. A. Wright) said the vote had not been found more than sufficient; as a matter of fact it was insufficient for what was required. He thought it would be a disgrace to the colony if Government House and its furniture were not kept in a fit and proper state.

CAPTAIN FAWCETT moved that the vote be reduced by £100. He thought this was as much as the colony could afford, looking at the financial position of the colony, which, according to the Governor's own statement, was about as bad as bad could be. He thought they ought to carry their policy of retrenchment to head quarters.

Mr. MARMION said although they might have every desire for retrenchment he thought this would be rather a shabby way of showing it. They were assured

that the sum asked for would not be more than sufficient, and it would be a discredit to the colony if they couldn't afford to keep up the furniture at Government House.

The motion to reduce the vote was negatived.

MR. MARMION asked whether the Director of Public works thought he would require £500 for jetty repairs during the current year? They only voted £400 last year, and there were only nine months of this year to be provided for.

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS (Hon. J. A. Wright) said not only would the sum asked for be required, but he had very strong doubts whether more would not be required. They had gone on increasing the length of the jetties all over the colony, and, the longer they were, the more repairs would they require. Moreover some of these jetties were getting old, and required considerable outlay in the way of repairs. He considered the demand a very moderate one, and he was doubtful whether he would be able to pull through the year with it.

MR. SCOTT, referring to the item "Fremantle Water Supply, £500," said he understood that £7,000 had already been voted for this purpose. Was it a fact that it had been suggested that these water works should be handed over to the Municipality? He thought it would be a wrong principle to allow a Municipality to receive the revenue from works constructed out of public funds, and that the receipts from these water works should go to the general revenue.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. Sir M. Fraser): Such is the intention. The hon. member will find £500 on the Estimates of Revenue under the head of "Fremantle Water Receipts."

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS (Hon. J. A. Wright) said the actual facts were these: a sum of £7,000 was voted by the Legislature for improving the water supply at Fremantle, and the money had been spent. On proceeding there the other day to settle the rate at which the water should be sold, it was then suggested to him for the first time that, as this money had been voted for the use of the town, the proceeds derived from the sale of the water—which was estimated to amount to considerably more

than would cover the interest on the capital expended and the working expenses—should go to the Municipal funds. He jocosely suggested that the Municipality should also have the railway receipts and the jetty dues. On the Estimates of Expenditure for this year he had placed £500, which he believed would well cover the expense in connection with this water supply; the same sum had been placed on the Estimates of Revenue, and was considerably under the amount he expected to receive.

MR. MARMION did not think that when this money was granted for providing Fremantle with a pure water supply it was the intention that the State should make money out of it; the intention and the object in view was to meet a pressing sanitary want. There was not a word in the report of the Commission as to the revenue from these water works going to the Government. He thought the Government should be satisfied with a fair interest upon the money expended, and a fair recompense for the labor employed, and that any surplus should go to the Municipality, so that the water rate might be reduced, it being now somewhat excessive.

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS (Hon. J. A. Wright) said that in no town in the world were the rates so low as the proposed rate at Fremantle. In London, and throughout England, the lowest rate was 1s. in the pound; the Government here were asking 6d. for private householders, and only half that rate for shops and other business premises.

MR. MARMION pointed out that in England water works were in the hands of private companies, whose object it was to make a profit out of them. It ought not to be so with the State. He certainly thought the revenue from supplying the shipping with water, and the Railway establishment should go to the benefit of this fund.

MR. CONGDON said that on the occasion of his taking office as Mayor of Fremantle a sanitary committee was appointed to consider and report upon the sanitary condition of the town, with the view of improving it. Among other suggestions was the necessity for an improved water supply, and it was recommended that the work should be undertaken by the Government. The result was that

His Excellency the Governor, in the speech with which he opened the session of 1886, informed the House that it would be requested to provide from general revenue a sum of £7,000 for the purpose of improving the defective water supply at Fremantle. Subsequently it was decided that the money should not come out of general revenue but be re-appropriated from the unexpended Harbor Works loan; but the original intention was that it should come out of current revenue. Had such been done there would have been no interest to provide, and he presumed the Municipality would have had the benefit. The House, however, in its wisdom decided that the money should come out of loan. When the matter was first brought under the attention of the Government the intention was—as was evident from His Excellency's speech—that the necessary funds should be provided out of general revenue, and he believed the original intention was that the Municipality should not be expected to pay the interest on the money expended. It appeared to him that they might with equal reason be expected to provide interest on the money voted towards the erection of their Town Hall.

The vote for "Works and Buildings" was then put and passed.

Roads and Bridges, £8,400 :

Agreed to, without discussion.

Ecclesiastical Grant, £3,543 :

MR. A. FORREST asked that the consideration of this item be postponed until next day, as several members who wished to speak to it were absent that evening. It was his intention to move that the vote be reduced. Although the grant had been going on for some years, that was no reason why it should last for ever, or no reason why it was right. The grant some years ago was a very large one, but it had been cut down in proportion to the strength of the different denominations. One of these bodies refused to accept this State aid, and he should like to see the other religious bodies equally independent. They knew that there was no such thing as State aid in the other colonies. In Ireland, too, it had been wiped out, and there was a strong agitation to do away with it in England. He hoped the Colonial Secretary would consent to report progress and

postpone the consideration of the vote until the next sitting day.

Progress reported, and leave given to sit again.

The House adjourned at a quarter past eleven o'clock, p.m.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL,

Monday, 26th March, 1888.

Repair of Police Station at Pinjarrah—Water Supply, stock route between Northampton and Ashburton—Proposed Mining Act—Residence for Medical Officer, Pinjarrah—Hampton Plains—Esperance Bay Railway Proposals, Rejection of—Railway from Bayswater to Vasse (Messrs. McNeil & Co.'s offer): referred to a select committee—Estimates (Revised), 1888: further considered—Adjournment.

THE SPEAKER took the Chair at seven o'clock, p.m.

PRAYERS.

REPAIRS TO POLICE STATION, PINJARRAH.

CAPTAIN FAWCETT, in accordance with notice, asked the Director of Public Works if any steps were to be taken to repair, or build a new police station at Pinjarrah? He asked the question in fulfilment of a promise made, some two years ago, that certain repairs would be made; but nothing had been done up to the present time, and the place was going to wreck and ruin.

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS (Hon. J. A. Wright) said that as soon as the Estimates for works and buildings were passed, these repairs would be taken in hand.

WATER SUPPLY, STOCK ROUTE BETWEEN NORTHAMPTON AND THE ASHBURTON.

MR. RICHARDSON, in accordance with notice, asked the Director of Public Works what vote the sum of £2,000 voted during last session, for a stock